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doubt, of the origin of this intelligence, now thought it time to interfere. The personage in question being still at his lodgings in the jail, they directed the keeper to turn the key upon him, and *un beau matin* he found himself again under arrest. He is now on trial for forging the signature of the Queen of Portugal, and may think himself fortunate if the affair end with nothing worse than confinement for life. It is understood that this adventurer has never even visited Paraguay. His real name is Fort, and not, as above described, Le Fort; but he also lays claim to two or three others. He pretends to be a descendant from Sebastian Cabot, and in order to give himself some appearance of connexion with individuals in Paraguay who are known abroad, he also assumes the name of Yegros, one of the principal Creole families, which has been repeatedly mentioned in this article. His style and title, as written out by himself at full length, are as follows, *Don J. A. Fort de Yegros y Cabot, Marques de Guarany*. This last name, as our readers are aware, is that of one of the principal tribes of Indians inhabiting the territory of Paraguay, but is not known there as the designation of any particular family.

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ART. VII.—1. *A View of West Florida*. By JOHN LEE WILLIAMS. With a Map. Philadelphia. 1827.

2. *Letters of the Hon. J. M. WHITE*, Delegate of the Territory of Florida.

3. *Answers of DAVID B. M'COMB, Esq., with an accompanying Letter of General LAFAYETTE*. Tallahassee.

THE country which bears the beautiful name of *Florida*, has been the theme of numerous writers, and the scene of many adventures, since the discovery of America. The shores of the Gulf of Mexico, lying opposite the islands of Cuba and St Domingo, would naturally be the first points of discovery on the continent. Hence the discovery of the coast of Florida, and that of New Spain, were almost simultaneous, and in consequence, North America was at first designated by these two names alone. The name of Florida, however, was gradually confined to a narrower space, by the French settlements in Canada, and by the successive establishments of the British

on the Atlantic coast. Spain, claiming the whole of the continent in virtue of the right of discovery and the pope's bull, viewed every settlement by other European powers as an encroachment; hence the numerous hostile occurrences between her and the colonies of France, Spain, and England, recounted by early writers. Spain was finally restricted to the comparatively insignificant portion, which continued to be known by the name of Florida, and which, after several changes of ownership, has at length become a part of the United States, and is now one of their territories.

The circumstance which has been stated, may account for the space which Florida has always occupied in the history of America, apparently so disproportioned to its intrinsic importance. Garcilaso de la Vega, who is supposed to have adopted in his compilation rather too many of the fictions of other writers, has given almost an entire volume to the transactions and events in Florida, from the first discovery by Ponce de Leon, in 1512, by whom it was named, until the death of Hernando de Soto, who landed at Tampa bay in 1539. Charlevoix, in his tedious folios, bestows a liberal portion of them on the affairs of this country, with copious accounts of its productions and climate, and of its natives. The Abbé Raynal, Adair, Burke, if he be the author of the 'History of the European Settlements,' have given it a place in their pages. The last relates the story of the enchanted fountain, supposed to possess the property of perpetuating and restoring youth to those who were so fortunate as to bathe in its waters; and sarcastically adds, that this precious liquid would be the most valuable article which the new world could export to the old. While this country was in the possession of the British, a period of fourteen years, several interesting accounts of it were published, describing its productions and general features, with considerable accuracy. The best known are those of Roberts and Romans; but the interior being occupied by numerous tribes of jealous and hostile Indians, it was impossible to obtain an accurate knowledge of it. Bartram, who ventured into the country while under the dominion of Spain, has written a very interesting work, but highly colored, and chiefly valuable for its botany. The survey of the coast under the direction of the British government, executed by Gault, is entitled to praise; his chart is still used, and is remarkable for its accuracy. Florida was considered by that government an important pos-

session, not only on account of its position in the gulf, which, among other advantages, it was supposed, would enable its subjects to carry on a forced trade with New Spain, but also on account of its adaptation to many valuable productions of southern climates, its timber and naval stores, and the Indian trade. Some valuable information, relative to this country, is contained in the work of Major Stoddard, a gentleman of considerable literary merit, who lost his life during the late war, in consequence of the bursting of a shell at the siege of Fort Meigs.

We are prompted by no feeling of national vanity, when we assert, that more has been done towards obtaining an accurate knowledge of Florida during the few years that it has been in our possession, than during the whole period which elapsed from its first discovery. Previous to the late war with Great Britain, it was inhabited by a warlike race, the Seminoles, emigrant Creeks, or *wild* people, as the term in that language denotes, so called, from their having wandered away from the main body of the nation. The more ancient races had been overcome by the Creeks, particularly the Yamasees, who had been either destroyed, or reduced to slavery, some of their descendants existing in this state even within a few years. The Seminoles and Creeks, therefore, having a common origin and relationship, it was natural they should unite for mutual support and assistance against any European enemy. Although the nation resided within the limits of the United States, they were continually exposed to be acted upon by Spain or England, by means of those who resided in Florida. During the late war, this advantage was not neglected by Great Britain, but in conformity to that wretched policy, as ruinous to the Indians as derogatory to her own character, these people were excited to take up the tomahawk against our defenceless women and children. The first plan of operations, adopted by the British in 1813 and 1814, was to get a footing on the Appalachicola river, near the junction of the Flint and Chatahouchy, and draw around them the Seminoles and the Creeks; to possess themselves, through their means, of the country between this river and the Alabama, where another strong hold was to be made, with a deposit of arms, and a combined force collected, and finally to unite with the Choctas and Chickasas, and reach the bank of the Mississippi, five or six hundred miles above New Orleans. A moment's reflection will show the alarm-

ing consequences of such a plan, if successfully accomplished. It was happily frustrated by the premature movements of the Creeks, and the rapid succession of signal victories obtained by General Jackson; by which the Indians were completely broken and subdued. When the British arrived, and constructed their temporary fort near the mouth of Flint river, it was too late, and the attempt to take possession of the Mobile bay, was successfully repulsed by the guns of Fort Bowyer. The reduction, we may almost say destruction, of the Creek nation was the primary cause which led to our subsequent acquisition of Florida. We could never be safe while this country was in the possession of a power either unwilling or too weak to prevent our enemy from occupying it, as a point whence to assail us, and to Spain it now became a useless, expensive, and perhaps dangerous possession. The hostile Creeks, who refused to treat with the officers of the United States, fled into Florida, and there, uniting with the Seminoles, still continued their hostility long after the treaty of peace with Great Britain. This led to General Jackson's campaign of 1818, when they were at last completely overcome, while an opportunity was afforded of traversing a country from which the Spaniards themselves had been excluded with jealous care by the Indians, and several fertile tracks were discovered, which at this day constitute the most valuable parts of the new territory.

After taking possession in 1821, one of the first measures of President Monroe, in relation to Florida, was the removal of the Indians from the valuable lands which they occupied. This task was successfully performed by Governor Duval, and two gentlemen, Colonel Gadsden and Mr Segui, who were associated with him. Their present number is supposed to exceed two thousand souls, scattered in little villages or hamlets. A tract of land has been assigned them near the centre of the peninsula, in the rear of Tampa bay, where a strong military force has been established; but it has been found necessary to supply these unfortunate people with provisions for several years, as they declare the country which they inhabit is too poor to raise corn. This, however, may well be doubted, as an attempt was made by Mr White, last summer, under the direction of the president, to induce them to remove beyond the Mississippi, which, however, they absolutely declined. The removal of the Seminoles, from a country peculiarly adapted to

their mode of life, abounding in game and fish, and possessing a fruitful soil, is a circumstance which cannot be viewed by the philanthropist without pain. It can be justified on no other ground than that of the *vis major*, probably the same argument which justified the Seminoles a century before, in dispossessing and reducing to slavery the unfortunate people by whom it was then occupied. To the mind of the statesman, the measure was justified by its necessity ; for without it, there was no possibility of uniting the eastern and western parts of the territory, under one government. The centre was occupied by the Seminoles, and of course all communication between the extremes was cut off. The memorial of the first legislative council of Florida, which is ascribed to the present delegate in Congress, and which shows an enlightened forecast of nearly all these prominent points of interest to the territory, and has since been so ably followed up in detail by its author, recommends the selection of a spot between the Appalachicola and the Suwany, for the seat of government, so soon as the Indians shall have been removed, and in the mean time, the construction of a national road from Pensacola to St Augustine. Both these objects have been successfully accomplished, and may be considered the groundwork of the present territorial organization ; had it been otherwise, the probability is, that the western part would, before this, have been annexed to Alabama, and the eastern to Georgia.

Shortly after the acquisition of Florida, several publications made their appearance, but containing very meagre accounts. The book of Mr Forbes is a wretched compilation from old works, which represent the country as resembling the West Indies in its productions, such as cocoa, coffee, cassava ; whereas this description is only applicable to the extreme southern part of the peninsula, or to the neighboring *Keys*. The little volume of Vignoles is something better, but his map, except as to a small portion of East Florida, is not to be depended on. It was not until the operations of the land office were nearly completed, that we could be said to possess anything like an accurate one. We believe, no country in the world contains such admirable delineations of its surface, as may be seen in the land office at Washington, of those portions of the new states and territories, which have been laid off in townships and sections. By these means every mile square is laid down with minute accuracy, and every six miles form a

complete map, where the smallest streams are traced with the greatest precision. Such a work, however, is not effected without great expense ; the surveys in Florida alone have probably cost not less than one hundred thousand dollars. Free access is allowed to these valuable documents deposited in the public offices ; and Mr Tanner, well known as a skilful and enterprising geographer, by whom the map of Florida, appended to the work which stands first at the head of this article, has been engraved and published, has laudably used these advantages, in the numerous valuable works of this description, which he has given to the public within the last four years. We contemplate, with great satisfaction, the unceasing attention to this department of useful knowledge, which is in truth the foundation of all exact acquaintance with any country. The various new maps, and improvements on old ones, which have been executed in this country, within the last ten years, would form the subject of an interesting article.

From the Preface to Mr Williams's book, it appears to have been composed merely as a memoir to accompany a map of Middle and West Florida, the first which has appeared since the execution of the public surveys. The memoir, although modest in its pretensions, contains much valuable matter ; but as it does not purport to be a complete geographical and statistical work, many subjects of interest are left untouched. It is, however, very full on all the topics necessary to the delineation of the natural features of the country, and the author appears to possess a respectable acquaintance with two important branches, mineralogy and botany. The work is evidently the production of a plain, candid man, who seems to be under no influence calculated to deceive himself, or to impose on others, for he has given many facts, and hazarded but few opinions. If the faults of mere composition may be passed over in any instance by a reviewer, it ought to be in favor of a work like the present, which in point of utility is before every previous publication on the same subject. Still, it is to be regretted, that some parts of it had not been previously subjected to the operation of a friendly file.

Mr Williams begins his memoir with a very brief, much too brief an account of the boundaries of Florida. For the last quarter of a century, this has been a fruitful subject of contention, and seems likely to be revived in a new and unexpect-

ed manner, between the United States and the state of Georgia. The correspondence between our government and that of Spain, on the subject of the western boundary, occupies a large space in our diplomatic history, and although the matter was finally closed by the late treaty, yet the question was never expressly determined ; so that some serious questions arising out of it, in relation to land titles, may at some future day be referred to the courts. A labored argument in favor of the right of the United States, is found under the title of 'The Florida Question stated, by H. M. Brackenridge,' in Mr Walsh's 'Register,' for 1816. The author is at present one of the judges of the territory, and the writer of the letter in the Appendix to Mr Williams's book. The northern boundary was settled by the treaty of 1795, at the thirty-first degree of north latitude, to the Chatahouthy, thence down that river to its junction with the Flint, and thence in a straight line to the head of the St Mary's river. The western part of the line was actually run and marked by Mr Ellicot ; but it was impracticable to complete the survey, in consequence of the hostility of the powerful tribes on the eastern part of the line. Mr Ellicot contented himself with seeking out the head of the St Mary's river, and there erecting a mound, which exists to this day, and drawing an imaginary line on the map, between this point and the junction of the Flint and Chatahouthy. Within the last twelve months, the President and the Governor of Georgia respectively appointed commissioners to mark the boundary, which was supposed to be determined by these two points, the one fixed by the treaty itself, the other established by the commissioner of the United States, and acquiesced in by Spain. But it appears, that after the line was nearly half completed, the Georgia commissioner was recalled by Governor Troup, who had determined not to regard Ellicot's mound as indicating the head of the St Mary's, there being a more southern branch, which, from its size, ought to be considered as its source. The business was in consequence suspended, and has given rise to another message of the Governor to the legislature of Georgia. This subject is now before the Congress of the United States. In the mean time, the gauntlet thus thrown down by Governor Troup, has been manfully taken up in a quarter, where we did not expect to find a champion. The acting Governor of Florida, Mr M<sup>r</sup> Carty, in a temperate, well written, and judicious message to the legis-



lative council of the territory, boldly resists the pretensions of Georgia, which extend to the most valuable part of Middle Florida.

We are informed by Mr Williams, that on taking possession of Florida for the United States, General Jackson divided the province into two parts, by the Suwany river, which was intended to conform as nearly as possible to the Spanish division of East and West Florida. The part which lies to the west of the Suwany, now composes the two districts called the Middle and Western, the capital of the territory, Tallahassee, being situated in the first, and Pensacola, our present naval depot, in the gulf, near the extreme western boundary of the latter. The two districts form a tract of country about two hundred and seventy-six miles long, from east to west, and from forty to ninety miles from north to south; containing sixteen thousand and five hundred square miles, and ten millions, five hundred and sixty thousand acres of land, which is about one third of the whole surface of the territory; and possessing a population of eight or nine thousand souls, rapidly increasing. Of the general appearance of the country Mr Williams gives the following description.

‘The face of the country is, generally, rolling, but there are neither mountains nor hills of any considerable magnitude. It is intersected from north to south by numerous rivers, many of which are navigable quite through the territory. A large portion of the country is covered with forests, the trees usually at a considerable distance apart, without underbrush; while the surface of the ground presents a carpet of verdant grass and flowers most of the year. The borders of the water-courses, however, as well as the hammocks, are covered with thick woods of hard timber, tangled with innumerable vines. An abundance of lakes and ponds diversify the interior; while the seacoast is indented with bays, bayous, and lagoons, abounding with fish of all kinds, and affording every facility for internal as well as foreign commerce. Although the largest portion of the country is covered with pine barrens, and much of it extremely poor, yet there is also much upland, interval, and hammock land, of the most excellent quality; peculiarly well calculated to produce sugar, rice, cotton, tobacco, indigo, corn, small grains, vines, and fruits; and all the timbers necessary for ship-building are found here in abundance. The pine barrens afford excellent grazing for cattle, and they are abundantly stocked with wild game. The climate is healthy and the seasons mild.’ pp. 5, 6.

The term *hammock*, which is used in this description, we believe is one peculiar to the southern states. It means a piece of ground thickly wooded, whether a plain or a hill, and distinguished from the open oak and hickory land, or the immense forests of thinly scattered pines, which with few exceptions cover the whole face of the country. The word has been confounded with *hummock*, used by mariners to designate the knolls, or small elevations, along the coast.

The description of the coast, which follows, is interesting in a geological view. From the Perdido bay to Cape St Blas, the coast presents a remarkable appearance; the beach is composed of sand as white as snow, with occasional hummocks of pure silex, which, to one sailing along, have the appearance of distant snow-capped hills. From St Blas to the Appalache bay, this changes to a yellowish brown sand, with occasional white hummocks; but after this, the coast is composed of a calcareous rock, covered with grass and rushes, for several miles into the sea. The interior to the east of the Chactahatchee river consists, for the greater part, of a mass of sand, from fifty to an hundred feet in thickness, upon a base of limestone. The difference in the appearance of the coast to the east and west of Cape St Blas, is ascribed by the author to the currents of the gulf being thrown so far out to sea by the shoals of the Tortugas, that they scarcely strike the coast of Florida, until they reach Cape St Blas; and thence westward, the coast being more acted upon by storms and currents, the fine white sand is washed upon the shore. We are not prepared to combat the theory of Mr Williams, but we confess that we are less satisfied with it, than with the simple fact, that this difference of appearance on the coast does exist. Our author proceeds to divide the country into various regions, or districts, for the convenience of a more minute description. The first is the tract between the Escambia, the principal river of the Bay of Pensacola, and the Perdido river, which forms the boundary line which separates Florida from Alabama. This tract is represented as chiefly alluvial, but of uneven surface, in some places even hilly, and finely watered with numerous springs and streams. The substratum is generally a clay of various colors, white, blue, yellow, and red. Strata of dark iron sandstone pervade it in many places, and are often thrown up in small hills, especially in the low grounds, near the water courses. To pursue the description in the words of the author;

‘This clayey substratum is generally covered with a fine, white, siliceous sand, which in its native state produces little more than pine forests and grass; except where the tide or the streams have thrown upon it fossil or vegetable remains; these form hammocks and intervals, rich in vegetable productions. The peninsula, extending between Pensacola bay and St Rosa sound, has not even clay beneath the sand. Peat is sometimes found there in extensive beds, with abundance of cypress and cedar stumps, standing far beneath the sand. A stratum of sandstone, three or four feet in thickness, is forming, some twenty miles from the west end of the peninsula, but it is yet too tender for building.’ p. 7.

The second division, is the tract which extends from the north side of St Rosa, or Chactahatchee bay, to the thirty-first degree, and bounded on the east by the Chactahatchee river. Excepting a few narrow strips of land on the river just mentioned, along the Yellow Water, which forms one of the branches of Pensacola bay, and a few tracts on some of the smaller streams, such as the Alaqua, Shoal, Uchee, and Bruce creeks, it is a dreary waste of pine forests, much of it hilly, but abounding with an extraordinary number of streams of the purest water, and extensive pastures for horned cattle. This tract, together with that which has been described, constitutes the two counties of Escambia and Walton; but out of the town of Pensacola, the whole population of both does not exceed eight hundred or a thousand souls. From the Alaqua to the Chactahatchee, the country is somewhat better, but by far the greater part of it consists of pine woods unfit for tillage; the places of better soil uniformly rest on soapstone and limestone formations.

‘The soapstone is found in strata, from five to eight feet thick, and extends to the Shoal river. The limestone has been discovered west of the Chactawhatchee, only in the Uchee valley, where it is abundant. On the eastern bank of the Chactawhatchee, the limestone is found less compact than on the western; it seems a congeries of shells, some of them entire, cemented together by a tough aluminous matter. Buhrstone of an excellent quality is found in large masses near the Alabama line. Millstones are made here of a better quality than can be procured from abroad. This stone extends as far eastward as the Flint river, and northward for a hundred miles or more. The structure is nearly compact; the cavities are very small; it appears like a mass of fine scallop shells; is evidently calcareous; and rings like marble. The color is from a light gray to a brown, the break conchoidal, and has an earthy appearance. Ponds and sink holes

are numerous between the Chactawhatchee and Chapola rivers, and large springs, forming navigable streams, often burst from this formation; the waters, though perfectly transparent, are highly impregnated with lime, and are not generally considered healthy.' pp. 7, 8.

The third division includes the extensive tract of country, which lies between the Chactahatchee and the Appalachicola rivers, and forms the counties of Washington and Jackson. Its surface is very various; but like the division last described, with the exception of the valley of rich land on the Chipola river, by far the most valuable body in the territory, and the river alluvions of the Appalachicola, subject to inundations in summer to the great injury of the crops, and very sickly, this is also a vast forest of pines. There are some smaller spots of tolerable land, such as Holmes's valley, Oak and Hickory hills, the Econfina, in all, including the larger bodies already mentioned, falling short of three hundred thousand acres. It is to be observed, however, that the quality of the soil covered by a growth of pine, is not entirely alike; the sand ridges, although covered with grass, are utterly hopeless in an agricultural view; but there are tracts dispersed in all directions of considerable extent, where the clay lies near the surface, distinguished by a larger growth of pine, intermixed with dogwood and scattering hickories, which may be made to produce by *coupenning* and manuring. When our country acquires a dense population, such lands may perhaps be cultivated. A remarkable feature in this third division is the number of large ponds, or small lakes, which are scattered over its surface, but not, like those of Tallahassee, surrounded by borders of rich land. Another feature equally remarkable, is the large springs, such is Holmes's, Shackleford's, Big spring of Chipola, and various others, which form navigable streams at once. In this division, also, we find one of the finest bays of the Gulf of Mexico, that of St Andrew's, which will one day become important. It presents a noble sheet of water equal to that of Pensacola, to which it is only inferior as to the quantity of water on its bar. Should the Appalachicola river be conducted into it, and it is said that a canal of a few miles will suffice to accomplish it, a town will rise up as rapidly as did Mobile, and, as a place of commerce, will very soon out-strip Pensacola.

The fourth division stretches from the Appalachicola river

to the Suwany, and is divided into Gadsden and Leon counties. We shall give the description of this last division in the author's words.

‘East of the Appalachicola river, there are few indications of stone, until we approach Leon county. Here a ridge appears above the earth, from four to six miles from the coast, and parallel with it; it dips a few degrees to the SSW., and is probably the edge of that stratum which forms the coast. The navigation of all the streams between St Mark's and Suwannee is impeded by it. This rock resembles chalk, generally of an ash color; some of it, however, is quite white, and is used for chalk. A kind of imperfect flint is imbedded in it, in form of a shelly nucleus. It becomes hard on exposure to the air. The flint is of a light gray color, full of holes, which are filled with the calcareous matter. It breaks with a conchoidal fracture; gives fire freely with steel; is quite opaque, but void of the greasy feel which is peculiar to pure flint. On points of the coast, where the waves have washed the calcareous matter away, these flinty nuclei form extensive and very rugged reefs. The fort of St Mark's is built of this limestone. Grass grows spontaneously on this rock, whether covered with salt or fresh water, even to the depth of twenty feet. Oysters grow in great masses to the rock, and they are very hard to separate from it.

‘Through the centre of Gadsden and Leon counties, ridges of clay extend, and form the base of an excellent soil. The upper stratum is red and very pure, and has an unctuous feel; but very small sandstones, of the size of a buck-shot or bullet, pervade the whole mass; this stratum is usually fourteen feet, more or less, in thickness. Under this, a white clay, similar in quality, extends from twenty to thirty feet, which reposes on a rotten limestone; somewhat different, however, from that found in the western part of Jackson county. The shells which compose it are more perfect, and the cement is a calcareous, instead of aluminous matter. It is found to make excellent lime. The springs and streams in this part of the country are very pure; they rise and run over the aluminous formations, but they all at length sink beneath the limestone rock, where, having united their currents and become highly impregnated with lime, they rise at once navigable rivers; such are the St Mark's, the Wakulla, and Oscilla rivers, which from these springs pass over the chalky formation to the sea.’ pp. 8, 9.

On the subject of climate, the work before us contains some good remarks. West Florida, from its proximity to the gulf, enjoys the seabreeze, which contributes to health and comfort. The pine woods, especially where it is hilly, are perfectly

healthy at all seasons, but the vicinity of ponds, marshes, and river alluvions, is subject to all the varieties of bilious affections, heightened by the warmth of the climate. All countries, while covered with their natural forests, may be considered healthy, excepting where, from peculiar circumstances, vegetable putrefaction is hastened in an extraordinary degree.

The writer next devotes several pages to the bays and inlets along the coast. The Perdido, which is the first in order, from west to east, is about thirty miles in length, and, on an average, two in width ; but, from the shallowness of the water on its bar, it is of little importance, excepting as the means by which, at some future day, the Bay of Pensacola may be united with that of Mobile. The Bay of Pensacola is decidedly the finest in the Gulf of Mexico, and as a naval station and rendezvous, was worth to us half the price paid for Florida. The least quantity of water, ever found on the bar, is twenty-one feet six inches, which is usually in the winter, after a continuance of northerly winds. Frigates, of the largest size, can enter without difficulty, and by means of lighters, there is very little doubt, that ships of the line might be brought in. The entrance is easily defended, and the sheet of water within, which is free from shoals, is wide and spacious. It has been for two years past our naval depot for the West India station ; extensive works are about to be constructed, and it must soon become a place of importance. The shores around the bay are not flat and uniform, but in many places elevated, presenting, particularly above the town, situations beautifully picturesque. St Andrew's bay, which has already been mentioned, was, until lately, but little known ; it has at least eighteen feet of water on its bar, is easy of access, has a good anchorage, and is perfectly sheltered from every wind. It divides into two arms, each of which extends far into the country. The rich settlements of Chipola, and several counties of Alabama, will give an impulse to the trade of such establishments as may be formed here, or have by this time probably been effected. St Joseph's bay lies farther to the east, but is more properly a cove formed by the gulf, as it receives no fresh water river. The entrance is at least six miles wide, the greater part of this space being occupied by a middle ground. The depth of water, at its entrance, has been variously represented ; our author states it at thirty feet, and such appears to have been the general opinion, until a special examination was

ordered last summer, when it was found to have but eighteen feet, to the great disappointment of many, who had begun to speculate on the removal of the naval depot from Pensacola. The Appalachicola bay, at the entrance of the fine river of that name, said to be one of the best for steam-boat navigation in the south, is formed by the islands of St Vincent and St George ; but is wide, and exposed to the full sweep of the easterly winds. The entrance affords little more than twelve feet of water, while vessels drawing more than eight feet are compelled to lie a long way off from the mouth of the river. The immense marshes, for nearly a hundred miles up this river, must always render any settlement near its mouth peculiarly unhealthy. The Appalache bay is next spoken of ; but it is a mere indentation of the coast, which receives the Ocklockney and St Mark's rivers. Fifteen feet of water may be carried into St Mark's, but the river is so much obstructed by oyster banks, that not more than seven or eight feet can be carried up to the Fort, which is notwithstanding the *entrepot* to the rich county of Tallahassee.

The next ten or fifteen pages of the work are taken up with an account of the capes, the islands along the coast, the rivers, and the lakes of West Florida ; but as it is not our intention to make an analysis of the whole work, we must recommend its perusal to those who are desirous to make themselves acquainted with these particulars. A considerable portion of the work is occupied with zoölogy, ornithology, and botany, perhaps greater than would be agreeable to general readers. This cannot be said of the historical outline, which was necessary and useful. We extract the account of the limestone caves of Chipola, which is curious and amusing.

‘ These [natural curiosities] consist, principally, of natural caverns, sinking rivers, great springs, and natural bridges.

‘ The Arch cave is situated near the public road, about three miles west of the ferries on Chapola river, in Jackson county. It opens, to the east, an aperture under a vast limestone rock ; about five feet high, and thirty feet wide. This passage descends gently, for three or four rods ; the cavern then opens, to the extent of a hundred feet wide, and fifty feet high. A deep channel of transparent water skirts the south side for some distance ; it then breaks off in wells, and finally disappears altogether. The course of the cave now turns northwest ; it grows narrower, and resembles an arch of the gothic order. After proceeding about sixty yards, the cave is crossed by a stream twenty feet wide, and

five deep ; in this, numbers of crawfish are seen. After passing this stream, the passage turns north of east and presents a hall, one hundred feet in length ; pretty straight, with a very uneven floor of red clay, covered with the debris of the decomposed rock. A row, or rather cluster of stalactical columns, supports the centre of this hall, while thousands of stalactites stretch down their long tubes towards the white bases, which are growing up to meet them, from the floor. Many large holes, in the rock above, are filled with bats, which, on the approach of lights, flit off to other dark recesses, with a roaring sound, like heavy wind.

‘The passage now becomes crooked and intricate, for a few rods, and then opens into another lofty apartment, from which there are many avenues, most of which remain unexplored, as well as two water courses, one of which bounds the passage.

‘This cave has been explored about four hundred yards. The congelations, on the sides of the walls, have the appearance of grey ice, through which, a sparkling crystallization appears. They often project into curls and folds, representing draperies, and mouldings of inimitable forms. The projections are nearly white, but the same sparkling crystalline appearance continues. The regular stalactites are hollow ; the outside, a soft chalky decomposition ; the centre, irregular sparry crystals, of a yellowish hue.

‘In the neighborhood of the Arch cave, Colonel Stone attempted, in three several places, to sink wells ; but in every instance, he came to hollow spaces in the earth ; and the well-digger, becoming at length frightened at the danger of entombing himself in some fathomless cavern, abandoned his work.

‘The Ladies’ cave is about one mile southeast from the Arch cave ; it opens to the northwest ; the entrance is wider, and easier of access, than the former ; it is, also, more spacious within. About fifteen paces from the entrance, it is divided into two passages ; the left, about fifty yards in extent, terminates in a deep river, which passes to the north, under a bold arch of sparry congelations, which has not been, and cannot, without a boat, be explored ; the banks are bold, rocky, and difficult of access. The right hand passage is formed of rugged rocks, bold projecting pillars, curious excavations, and fanciful galleries, which it would be difficult to describe. The congelations are fine and infinitely various. The passage terminates in a narrow chasm, which has the appearance of a water-course, through which, at about three rods distance, another room appears. This has been but imperfectly explored. To the right of this last branch of the cave, the excavation has been examined about one hundred feet ; many holes appear to lead off in different directions ; some of these may lead to other caverns.’ pp. 35-37.



Upon the whole, this little volume is creditable to its author, and well deserves a place in our libraries. We have only to add, that it is much to be desired, that Mr Williams should persist in the intention announced in his Preface, of giving the public a similar account of East Florida.

The Appendix contains a number of interesting documents, principally the letters of Mr White, the present delegate of the territory, on various subjects of interest to his constituents, and serving to throw light on the character and resources of the country. We have perused these documents with much satisfaction, and approve highly of this mode of bringing subjects directly before the department which is ultimately to act on them. Mr White possesses a highly liberal and enlightened mind, and has ever manifested himself an active, zealous, and efficient representative. He has, in fact, already laid the groundwork of almost every important measure calculated to ensure the present and future prosperity of the territory which he represents. In procuring the passage of the preëmption law, which met with serious opposition in Congress, he rendered a signal service to his constituents, many of whom, had he failed, would have been driven from their homes, or have fallen victims to merciless speculators. The proposition introduced by him last winter, respecting the propagation of the live oak, has been considered highly deserving of public attention. From a recent survey of Florida, under the direction of the secretary of the navy, for the purpose of ascertaining the quantity of this timber, so valuable for ship-building, it has been discovered, that this is much less than has been supposed. Extensive plantations of live oak, which is said to be of rapid growth, have been ordered by the government to be made in the most suitable places. This kind of forecast is highly commendable. A private English gentleman, Evelyn, a century ago, formed those plantations of oak, which now supply the British navy. But Mr White is chiefly indebted, for the reputation he has acquired, to his well written letters on the subject of Florida canals, and his zealous efforts in Congress to carry his plans into execution. Mainly in consequence of his exertions, aided by the efficient coöperation of Mr Webster, a sum of money, sufficient to cover the expense, was appropriated, and a corps of the most skilful engineers proceeded last spring on this important duty. Their surveys have been completed, but the

result has not yet been made known to the public. When the practicability of a ship channel, across the northern part of the peninsula, was first suggested by Mr White, it produced a great sensation in our commercial cities, where the dangers and delays of the present navigation round the cape, and among the Bahamas, were known to their sorrow. The importance of such a passage, in every point of view, was so obvious, that many expressed it as their opinion, that if the whole peninsula could be swept away by some convulsion of nature, we should be vastly the gainers by it. The idea of a thorough-cut had something magnificent in it. Its practicability, or rather impracticability, could not be ascertained without a previous examination. If practicable, the benefits which might flow from it, were beyond calculation; and if its execution exceeded our present capacity, the suggestion was still a noble one, though unsuccessful, and by no means deserving the appellation of visionary. Humboldt has suggested the practicability of cutting through the Isthmus of Darien, but it would not follow, if a board of engineers, however able, should report it impracticable, that he was therefore a visionary projector. These remarks are made in justice to Mr White, as the first to suggest a project of great national benefit, but which, it is rumored, has not been found within the reach of any reasonable sum of money to accomplish. It is understood, however, that their report on the second plan suggested in the letters of Mr White, but not entirely original with him, will be decidedly favorable. In importance, it is inferior only to the first. We allude to the continued inland navigation for steam-boats, by connecting canals, from the Mississippi to the St Mary's. If a canal of sufficient size for the passage of steam-boats could be made, it would almost compensate for the failure of the thorough-cut; and it is highly probable, that if the public attention had not been so much awakened by the prospect of accomplishing this last, the practicability of a steam-boat canal would never have been ascertained.

The Answers of Mr M'Comb appear to have been elicited by a number of well directed queries from an intelligent citizen of Berne, Switzerland, and transmitted through General Lafayette. It appears from the answers of Mr M'Comb to these queries, that he is a practical planter, residing in the neighborhood of the fine tract of land voted to the General by Congress, and selected adjoining the city of Tallahassee. Mr

M' Comb has given some interesting particulars ; but we fear somewhat colored by a warm fancy. We cannot be brought to believe that the blessings of this life are so unequally and so partially dispensed among the dwellers on different portions of the earth, as, by the perusal of this paper, we should be led to suppose. We cannot help thinking that the advantages of the Tallahassee district are somewhat exaggerated ; and that the counterpart of the picture has not been shown us at all. That it does possess a counterpart, we cannot doubt ; otherwise it would be a paradise. It is true, the answers are limited to the questions proposed, and do not profess to give a full account of the country, setting forth what is bad, as well as what is good. Now, judging from a presentment of a grand jury of Tallahassee, which has gone the rounds of the newspapers, we should not pronounce a very high opinion of the state of society and manners in that part of the world. It may be a paradise, but its inhabitants are not angels. It may be said, that such a state of things is incident to new countries. This is doubtless true, and how many other things are incident to new countries, which are nuisances or annoyances to emigrants from old countries ? The *infant* state of settlements, is, like the infant state of the world, a *savage* or barbarous state ; not indeed literally so, but in a greater or less degree. New settlements are undoubtedly most pleasant to those who are accustomed to them, or who, from long absence from the older settlements, have forgotten the comforts and conveniences which they there enjoyed. No one, who has not had the experience of a new country, is aware of the habits or the conveniences, which he must be prepared to give up, when he thinks proper to emigrate ; others indeed may be found in their stead, but they are such as to be most pleasing to one of the cast of mind of Colonel Boon, who loved the solitude of the forest, the freedom from society and its restraints, and who preferred a residence ' forty miles from any place.'\* However rapid the increase of population and the improvements of a new country may be, many years must elapse before it can possess the comforts and advantages of an old one. Of these we are not fully sensible until we find the want of them ; and as to the delights of the former,

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\* This was part of Colonel Boon's description of a tract of land in Kentucky, entered by him in the Virginia Land-Office.

one half of them exist only in the imagination. We have no desire to throw discouragements in the way of those who think they can better their condition by emigration, but to warn them against expectations which must lead to disappointment.

Mr M'Comb prefers a Swiss colony to any other. We think it highly probable, from the steady and persevering character of that people, that they would be most likely to prosper. The French have too much imagination; they will paint a thousand things in the distant perspective, which will not be realized on a near approach; they will become impatient of delay, and disgusted with unexpected obstacles. The Swiss and the Germans have uniformly been found the most contented and persevering of the European emigrants, and consequently the most useful. Mr M'Comb states an important fact with respect to *white laborers* in Middle Florida. He says they *can* and *do* endure the heat of the sun in their agricultural operations, without experiencing the least inconvenience from it. This is owing to the elevation of the land, and to the contiguity of the gulf, and consequently the influence of the seabreeze. The two great staples of the country, he observes, are the sea-island cotton and the sugar-cane, both of which have succeeded, and of course will succeed. In addition to these, he mentions indigo, rice, and all the various grains, and *cerealia* of the southern states. He thinks the Swiss colony might soon derive a profit from the culture of the vine, of which there are eight or ten different species, natives of the woods, where they bear an abundance of grapes. The woods are filled with wild grape vines, which require only the skill of the vine-dresser. The French blue grape, it seems, has in many instances been engrafted on the wild vines, and has borne the second year, and the third abundantly. This is a very important fact, as it goes to prove, that, by taking advantage of the numerous stools or roots, a vineyard might be rendered productive in half, perhaps one third of the time requisite farther north. A population, therefore, acquainted with the culture of the vine, and the manufacture of wine, of both of which our population in general is entirely ignorant, would be a valuable acquisition. Mr M'Comb states, that the olive and the orange have been cultivated in other parts of the territory with success, and that the few orange trees about Tallahassee, from three to four years old, have never suffered the slightest injury from frost. The white

mulberry has been successfully introduced ; the purple mulberry is a native of the forests, and very abundant. Mr M' Comb says, that ' fruit trees from Prince's botanic garden, New York, have succeeded well, particularly peaches, nectarines, and apricots. The plum, cherry, mulberry, *olive*, orange, and *apple* grow wild. In fact, I never knew a country where the forests abound with a greater variety of indigenous fruit.' The celebrated botanist, Michaux, speaks of a wild olive found in Florida, it is believed the only part of America where it is known, unless in the adjoining portions of the southern states. But its fruit is small, and bitter, and of no value. Perhaps it might furnish valuable stocks to engraft on. The *apple* spoken of, we presume, is the crab-apple. It is generally understood, that the orchard apple and the garden cherry are not successfully cultivated so far south. The wild oranges spoken of, are mentioned by Mr Williams as the sour, and what is called the bitter-sweet. These are only a few of the facts stated by Mr M' Comb, in his pamphlet, which contains much valuable information for emigrants, making some allowance for what, to us, appears somewhat overcharged.

Florida is undoubtedly a most important acquisition to these United States, in a military and political, if not in a commercial and agricultural view. We should always have been uneasy with this country in the hands of a foreign power. Tribes of Indians not under our control ; the mouths of some important southern rivers in a foreign territory ; the communication on the line of seacoast interrupted between the southern states ; important harbors on the gulf in the hands of those who might be enemies, or at least favor those who were ;—these and many other considerations urged to the acquisition of Florida. The sovereignty was well worth the five millions paid for it, especially as the amount was employed in relieving our own citizens, and creating a capital which contributed to the more rapid developement of the resources of our own country. All that can be added to Florida may be considered as so much clear gain, by increasing the wealth, commerce, and resources of the nation ; and we think it decidedly the policy of the government to give every encouragement to its speedy population and improvement.

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